



Methamphetamine Newsletter

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December 2006

National and State Experts Convene in Washington for Meth Awareness Day

Several of the nation's leading experts in substance abuse prevention, treatment and enforcement gathered in Washington, D.C. today for the Department of Justice's first-ever National Methamphetamine Awareness Day observance. During the event, panelists stressed the importance of educating the community about the dangers that methamphetamine use poses to youth, families and communities.

Data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicated a rise in national methamphetamine abuse treatment admission numbers among ages 12 and older, jumping from 13 admissions per 100,000 in 1993 to 56 admissions per 100,000 in 2003. To help address this growing threat, the DOJ developed National Methamphetamine Awareness Day, which will be observed annually on Nov. 30.

"While the damaging effects of methamphetamine abuse are often clearly displayed on the faces of its victims, it is the wake of destruction meth leaves on families, communities and the environment that makes this drug so devastating to society," said Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, who led the panel. "National Methamphetamine Awareness Day is an important opportunity to raise awareness about the dangers of meth abuse and reduce demand for this very addictive and destructive drug."

Panelists highlighted effective strategies that have been employed to curb meth use, noting the success of precursor state laws that require over-the-counter cold and asthma medications containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine to be placed behind the counter. Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are among the many chemicals used in producing meth in labs (as reported by the [Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America \(CADCA\)](#) website).

Let NACo Know About Your County's Efforts to Address Methamphetamine

NACo would like to know what your county is doing about the methamphetamine problem in this country. Every month we will spotlight one county's program, all you have to do is send information on what your county is doing to Justin Carmody at jcarmody@naco.org or call (202) 942-4279 and we can feature your county in this newsletter.



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"National Methamphetamine Awareness Day Coalition" Announces \$300,000 for a Public Awareness Campaign Targeting Methamphetamine Abuse in Indian Country

Partnering with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PFDA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is leading a new public awareness campaign aimed at targeting methamphetamine abuse among Native Americans. Combined, the coalition partners have contributed \$300,000 in support of this groundbreaking effort for Indian Country, announced at a news conference today at the National Press Club.

"By creating an awareness of this lethal drug and educating people about its devastating effects—especially in Indian Country—we can prevent people from trying it even once," said Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne. "The announcement of this campaign, to which the Department of the Interior is contributing \$100,000, is an appropriate and important way to mark National Methamphetamine Awareness Day."

Nationally, Native American (American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians) communities experience the highest rates of methamphetamine abuse among all other ethnicities.

"This new partnership will save lives," said NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Johnson. "Thanks to these generous commitments, we can educate Indian Country on the deadly effects of methamphetamine use and begin turning the tide on its grip on our people. While Indian Country may have been hit the hardest by meth, we have to seize the opportunity to create innovative solutions."

Before the forging of this coalition, there was no national anti-meth media campaign tailored to Indian Country. The initial phase of the campaign will include Indian Country specific radio and print ads. PDFDA has created a number of anti-meth campaigns and, working with ONDCP has developed a number of anti-drug campaigns specifically targeting Native Americans.

"The Partnership is thrilled to participate in this much-needed, collaborative effort to address the meth crisis in Indian Country," said Stephen J. Pasierb, President & CEO of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. "We have worked with parents and communities across the nation to help reduce demand for meth and prevent its spread—through this new prevention program created specifically to address the needs of Indian Country, we hope to help protect tribal communities from further devastation."

Carole Lankford, Vice-Chairwoman of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes knows first-hand the devastation meth can cause in a community. In the last four years the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribal Social Services has placed more than 35 meth-affected children in the Tribal foster care system. The agency is experiencing tired, worn out caregivers who are now turning children back before the agency can even achieve permanency for these high need children.



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"We are working diligently to overcome this problem and address the needs of our community," said Lankford. "This type of campaign is sorely needed in Indian Country and we highly support systemic changes that increase the funding available to social services agencies and the Indian Health Service in dealing with the long term impacts of caring for drug affected children and families"(as reported by the [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) website).

NACo calls on Congress to Complete Work on Critical Anti-Meth Abuse Legislation

The National Association of Counties (NACo) today marked the first-ever National Methamphetamine Awareness Day by urging Congress to complete work on important legislation to help American communities and families cope with the devastating effects of methamphetamine abuse.

"NACo urges Congress to enact pending legislation and provide adequate funding to help communities and families cope with the effects of this highly addictive and dangerous drug," said NACo President Colleen Landkamer, Commissioner, Blue Earth County, Minn. "NACo applauds U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales for establishing National Methamphetamine Awareness Day and pledges to continue working with the Department of Justice and Congress to curb the meth epidemic in America."

As part of reauthorization of the *PATRIOT Act*, NACo helped win enactment of the *Combat Meth Epidemic Act*, sponsored by Sen. Jim Talent (R-Mo.) and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), which restricts the sale of pseudoephedrine and requires purchasers to show photo identification and sign a logbook. However, other important anti-meth abuse legislation remains pending as the final weeks of the 109th Congress pass. Specifically, NACo:

- Urges Congress to provide \$1.1 billion for the Justice Assistance Grant program, which helps local governments establish anti-drug taskforces as well as support community treatment and prevention programs.
- Calls for the Senate to pass S. 2019, the *Meth Remediation Research Act of 2005*, sponsored by Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) and Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.), which is currently being held up by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.). This legislation, already passed by the House, authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to establish scientifically based guidelines for the cleanup of former meth labs. The House-passed version was sponsored by Rep. Bart Gordon (D-Tenn.).
- Supports the House level of \$1.8 billion for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant. The block grant accounts for approximately 40 percent of all public funding for treatment and prevention. This \$75 million increase over last year's funding is vital to meet the growing demand for meth treatment.

Additionally, NACo urges Congress to tighten the international market for bulk pseudoephedrine to help curb the import of meth



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into the U.S. from Mexican superlabs.

NACo has taken a leadership role in fighting meth abuse in America with the release of five national surveys. The most recent survey in July 2006 found that law enforcement officials in 44 states said that methamphetamine remains the number one drug problem in their county.

Previous surveys found that meth was responsible for an increase in out-of-home placements for children, that meth was the largest drug that drove people to county public hospital emergency rooms, and that the need for meth treatment was growing.

"NACo conducted these surveys because counties are on the front lines in responding to the methamphetamine epidemic," Landkamer said. "Meth abuse causes remarkable financial, legal, medical, environmental, and social problems for counties. We will continue to work with Congress and the Administration to fight this national epidemic."

Incentive-Based Therapy Improves Outlook for Methamphetamine Abusers

New research suggests that offering methamphetamine abusers an incentive-based behavioral therapy program called contingency management (CM — also known as Motivational Incentives), along with psychosocial therapy is more effective than psychosocial therapy alone. The study was supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institutes of Health, and is published in the November 2006 issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

A CM program applies rules and consequences to help people change their behavior. In other words, participants are in treatment with contingencies, or rewards. In this case, the rules required production of drug-free urine samples. The rewards were plastic chips that could be exchanged for prizes. Other examples of CM awards might be raffle tickets, or small prizes that could be exchanged for a larger prize. The more the patient follows the rules, the more chips they earn. If the rules are not followed, they can lose chips.

Previous studies have shown the effectiveness of CM as a treatment for stimulant abuse (primarily cocaine). This most recent study suggests that CM can help methamphetamine abusers to stop or reduce their abuse of the drug for a longer time than individuals who receive the standard treatment as usual but do not receive such incentives, or rewards.

"Methamphetamine abuse is associated with numerous medical consequences, such as rapid, irregular heartbeat, stroke, severe dental problems, psychosis, and addiction, and constitutes one of the nation's most serious public health problems," says Dr. Elias A. Zerhouni, director of the National Institutes of Health. "The results of this study are an important step toward developing more effective therapies to combat it" (as reported by the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)).



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New Anti-Meth Advertising Set to Begin in Wyoming

The Wyoming Department of Health, through its Substance Abuse Division, will start airing new anti-meth television commercials statewide Monday as part of a hard-hitting media campaign that also includes posters, newspaper advertising and a website. Our previous efforts successfully raised awareness about the seriousness of Wyoming's meth problem, said Dr. Brent Sherard, Wyoming Department of Health Director. "With this new campaign, we want to maintain that level of awareness, encourage more involvement in anti-meth community efforts and discourage meth use among young people."

"Meth dealers are not shy and they are playing hardball in their search for new customers," Sherard continued. "To fight them, a strong approach is needed. We realize the new television commercials will not be easy for everyone to watch, and the posters and newspaper ads are frankly a little harsh," Sherard said. "We're asking people to keep in mind that we are targeting 12 to 24 year olds, and the same old approach just isn't enough to hold their attention."

Two television commercials have been produced and will air statewide on Wyoming television stations and cable providers. One of the spots describes the effects of meth in a horror movie-like setting; the other depicts the brain damage meth can cause with a series of graphic visual images.

Thousands of interactive posters will also be distributed throughout the state. Each poster features a normal photo of a face, an arm or a mouth with perforated tear-offs that help reveal the harm to skin and teeth that meth users frequently experience. The planned Wyoming newspaper advertisements are similar to the posters.

Each element of the media campaign encourages Wyoming residents to visit the department's new anti-meth website at **methkillswyoming.org**. This site was designed as an interactive, no-nonsense source of information about methamphetamine, the drug's effects, how to get help and how to get involved at the community level. The campaign's television commercials and newspaper advertisements can also be viewed on the site.

"We are excited about this media campaign, but it is not our department's only meth prevention effort. We are taking a balanced approach to the problem by working with community members," said Steve Gilmore, Administrator of the Wyoming Department of Health's Substance Abuse Division. Gilmore noted his division's "Core Team" effort to support local initiatives and continuing education presentations around the state (as reported by the [Wyoming Department of Health](#)).



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U.S. Crackdown Sends Meth Labs South of the Border

The methamphetamine laboratories that once plagued California's hinterlands and powered a national explosion of drug abuse have been replaced by an increasing supply from Mexico, U.S. law enforcement officials say.

Methamphetamine production has surged south of the border, from Baja California ranches to the highlands of Michoacan to the industrial parks here in Mexico's second largest city, where authorities in January busted the largest laboratory ever discovered in the Americas.

The fortress-like compound ringed by high brick walls housed 11 custom-designed pressure cookers that could produce 400 pounds of the drug per day. It dwarfed anything ever found in California, where the standard cooking tool is a 23-quart beaker and a 20-pound batch is considered a good production day.

"It was the mother lode of mother lodes," a U.S. law enforcement official said.

The boom in Mexican methamphetamine production stems from successful efforts in the U.S. to control the sale of chemicals used to produce the drug, including the cold medicine pseudoephedrine.

Drug traffickers, some of them ex-convicts and fugitives from the United States, including a former chemistry professor from Idaho arrested last month, authorities say, have resettled in Mexico because of the easy access to pseudoephedrine and other chemicals.

The largest share of the chemicals is believed to be shipped to Mexico from factories in China and India and routed through Hong Kong. China has emerged as the top concern for U.S. authorities.

Like traffic in heroin and cocaine, the methamphetamine economy has become a global phenomenon. So too is the battle to control what most U.S. law enforcement authorities consider the country's greatest drug threat (as reported in the [Los Angeles Times](#) on November 26, 2006).

Meth's Hidden Cost at the Workplace in Minnesota

Meth use appears steady or even lower recently across the nation, studies show. But those studies show that the addiction rate among meth users has doubled since 2002, which means fewer are able to confine themselves to occasional, recreational use. Many Minnesota employers say they don't see much of the drug, although treatment professionals say that may be because meth addiction so incapacitates people they quickly quit their jobs. "The labor force is just full of untreated addiction," said Carol Falkowski, director of research communications at the Hazelden Foundation.



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Karen Hagen, CEO of Excelllo, a Minneapolis firm that consults on workplace behavioral issues said: "Employers have really been caught off guard."

Drugs at work are expected to be on the agenda during the next legislative session. Beyond enforcement and education, Falkowski wants to convince employers that it makes more sense to treat abusers than to try to replace them. "Addiction affects too many people for you to fire your way out of the problem," she said.

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The majority of states have passed drug-free workplace laws that give employers a discount on their workers compensation or health insurance premiums if they fulfill certain requirements, said Sherry Green at the National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws in suburban Washington, D.C. Those include: a written drug policy, some form of drug testing, employee assistance and drug education programs, and supervisor training.

In Minnesota, Sen. Julie Rosen, R-Fairmont, plans to introduce similar legislation in the upcoming session. "It's the medium-size to small employers who are suffering," Rosen said.

The state now requires employers to have a written drug policy only if they do drug testing, Minneapolis employment lawyer Joseph Schmitt said. It also says employers can fire workers if they have drugs at work but not if they test positive for a drug -- unless they then refuse or fail treatment, Schmitt said.

Part of the problem for rural employers is the small workforce around them, said Deborah Durkin, coordinator of the methamphetamine program for the Minnesota Department of Health. She said that's why one remote factory agreed to stop drug testing when employees said they'd prefer to accept lower health benefits in exchange.

Clow Stamping Co. in Merrifield, Minn., is a remote employer that has a comprehensive policy on chemical dependency problems. The 300-employee company, which fabricates metal components for equipment manufacturers, does universal pre-employment drug screening, personnel manager Twyla Flaws said. "We're highly industrialized, and working impaired is not safe," Flaws said. "We have very large equipment here."

Clow also tests employees under the conditions allowed by Minnesota law, including workplace accidents or "reasonable suspicion" -- usually someone making a lot of mistakes or missing a lot of work, Flaws said. The company's vigilance may be one reason Flaws remembers finding only two meth users on staff in her 25 years at the company. "It's prevalent in our area, but we know that and we watch for it," she said (as reported in the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) on October 24, 2006).

NACo's Joe Dunn on NPR's *Justice Talking* Program

NACo Associate Legislative Director Joe Dunn represented NACo on the nationally syndicated National Public Radio show *Justice*



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Talking to discuss methamphetamine abuse in America. He discussed NACo's five meth surveys and the association's call for comprehensive federal legislation and funding to help counties cope with the effects of the dangerous and highly addictive drug. The show aired the week of Nov. 20 on more than 120 NPR-affiliated radio stations across the country and can be heard online at www.justicetalking.org/programarchive.asp ("Is Crystal Meth the New Crack?").

Resources

U.S. Department of Justice Offers *Meth 101* Video

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) has created a *Meth 101* video that gives introductory information on methamphetamine in a three-part format. The Department of Justice has also produced a *Meth 101* PowerPoint presentation as well as a PowerPoint presentation that focuses on women and meth abuse.

The Association County Commissioners of Georgia Produce *Methamphetamine: The County Response* DVD

The Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) has released a DVD entitled: *Methamphetamine: The County Response*. This DVD was specifically developed for county commissioners to use in their communities. The DVD can be used at County Commission Board meetings, work sessions, with county employees, community organizations, school groups, the faith community, libraries, business groups, local chamber of commerce, civics groups, services organizations and public access television.

The DVD is 10 minutes long; it was produced by the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) and in cooperation with ACCG staff. It is an important message about the dangers of methamphetamine, commonly called Meth, and how methamphetamine directly affects counties throughout Georgia.

This video educates viewers on the strain it puts on a wide range of county resources. The message the DVD conveys is that Meth has invaded all regions of Georgia. It is destroying homes, spewing toxic waste into the environment, tearing apart families, overwhelming law enforcement and social service agencies and killing some people. Meth is "manufactured" in homes, apartments, barns, hotel rooms, parks, in trunks of cars and other areas. Meth is very addictive; it should not be used by anyone not even once.

In the DVD, several Georgia county commissioners comment on the impact of methamphetamine in their counties. You also hear from a juvenile court judge, the immediate past president of the National Association of Counties (NACo), a Department of Natural Resources official and a Georgia Bureau of Investigation chemist who all emphasize the importance of educating your community about the dangers of methamphetamine. For more information on this DVD you may contact Kathleen Tonore at ktonore@accg.org.



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Resources, continued

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America's Meth Information and Resource Center

The [Partnership for a Drug-Free America](#) offers a number of resources on methamphetamine with different sections for teens, young adults, parents, and the community. The website has a number of personal accounts from former meth addicts as well as research and statistics on meth use throughout the country.

Shasta County Methamphetamine Task Force

Shasta County, California has formed a [Methamphetamine Task Force](#) comprised of community members from the law enforcement, business, education, and social service sectors who are concerned with the impact methamphetamine is having on their community. They have created a website with information on community resources, data and statistics, and the task force's future agenda.

Meth Education for Elementary Schools (MEDFELS)

The Midwest HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area), the Missouri Department of Public Safety, and the Southeast Missouri State University teamed up to assist third and fourth grade teachers in presenting an accurate portrayal of the dangers associated with the manufacture, distribution, and use of methamphetamine. The [MEDFELS](#) website contains information for elementary school teachers to implement a curriculum for their students.

Studies/Reports

National Drug Threat Assessment 2007

National Drug Intelligence Center, U.S. Department of Justice (October 2006)

The [National Drug Threat Assessment 2007](#) is an interagency assessment that provides a strategic overview and predictive outlook of the threat to the United States from the illicit trafficking and use of cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin, pharmaceutical drugs, and other dangerous drugs.

Child Welfare: Improving Social Service Program, Training, and Technical Assistance Would Help Address Long-standing Service-Level and Workforce Challenges

U.S. Government Accountability Office (October, 2006)

This report presents [U.S. Government Accountability Office \(GAO\)](#) findings and recommendations concerning child welfare issues, including the exposure of children to drugs and drug-production environments.



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Studies/Reports, continued

Drug Prosecution and Prevention Across the Nation: Prosecutors' Perceptions of Drug-Related Crime and Strategies to Combat the Problem in Their Communities

National District Attorneys Association (October, 2006)

This publication from the [National District Attorneys Association](#) focuses on the increasing involvement of prosecutors in shaping and developing unique drug programs such as those that incorporate community involvement, focus on alternatives to incarceration, and most recently, programs that deal specifically with methamphetamine use, manufacturing and distribution. In addition this report details the significant findings of an American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI) study on drug crime prosecution and prevention.

Children at Clandestine Methamphetamine Labs: Helping Meth's Youngest Victims

Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice (2003)

This study produced by the [Department of Justice](#) discusses the increasing number of children involved in methamphetamine lab-related incidents in the United States, the risks these children face, and child welfare interventions.

Combating Methamphetamine Laboratories and Abuse: Strategies for Success

U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (2002)

The [Community Oriented Policing Services \(COPS\) Office](#) began funding state and local law enforcement agencies to combat the production, distribution, and use of methamphetamine in 1998. These methamphetamine grants encourage law enforcement agencies to respond to meth problems with advanced technologies and creative problem-solving strategies. Evaluations focus on the history of the methamphetamine problem in the areas to which the grants were awarded and develop detailed process evaluations of each grant's implementation. This publication provides a brief summary of the findings of the National Evaluation and suggests ways that agencies can better deal with their own methamphetamine problems through a discussion of the COPS Problem-Oriented Policing Guide to Clandestine Laboratories.

Surveys

NACo's The Criminal Effect of Meth on Communities Survey Available

If you are interested in obtaining a hard copy of our July 2006 survey exploring the impact of meth use on local criminal justice systems and the communities they serve, we have a number of copies. To obtain the survey please just contact Justin Carmody at jcarmody@naco.org or (202) 942-4279 giving your address and number of copies you would like to receive.



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Events/Training Opportunities

[4th Annual Meth Awareness Conference](#)

Funding Opportunities

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)

The [Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) offers the BEDI grant program is designed to help local governments redevelop brownfields, defined as abandoned, idled, or underutilized property, including industrial and commercial facilities, where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by the presence or potential presence of environmental contamination.

Events/Training Opportunities

4th Annual Meth Awareness Conference

Casper, Wyoming January 10-12

This [conference](#) is directed towards professionals in social service fields, first responders, educators, business owners and the community at large and will address such topics as prevention, drug endangered children, women who use meth while pregnant, treatment, and additional medical issues surrounding meth use.

The purpose of this monthly electronic newsletter is to provide county officials, administrators, criminal justice and mental health professionals, and other interested parties relevant information on the nation's methamphetamine problem. Information is gathered from many sources each month through a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. *If you have questions or comments regarding the content of this newsletter, please send a message to jcarmody@naco.org.*